

DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

The California Highway Patrol is a law enforcement and traffic safety agency reporting to Business, Transportation and Housing Agency Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet and Governor Gray Davis.



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May 6, 2003

03-15

CHP LAUNCHES MAY SAFETY BELT “SWEEPS”

SACRAMENTO—The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is conducting an intensive two-month media campaign in May and June and a two-week enforcement campaign from Monday, May 19 through Sunday, June 1, that will target motorists who don’t use their safety belts.

The \$1.5 million federally-funded media campaign will include billboard advertising and radio and cable television commercials in English and Spanish.

The media campaign will feature the CHP’s award-winning “Remember. Or Be Remembered.” ads that were aired during the campaign’s first phase which ran for one week in November 2002.

The media campaign reflects CHP research which shows that most people who aren’t wearing belts have simply forgotten to buckle up for a short trip.

The enforcement campaign will involve overtime shifts for traffic officers statewide. In the November 2002 enforcement period, officers wrote 10,483 citations.

“It’s all about saving lives,” said CHP Commissioner D. O. “Spike” Helmick. “A motorist without a safety belt on the way to the video store or the family barbecue is just as vulnerable as someone on a long-distance trip.”

Over 91 percent of Californians buckle up, which is one of the highest safety belt compliance rates in the nation, Helmick said.

“The campaign is focusing on the holdouts,” he said. “We’re hoping motorists will get the

message from our media advertising and fasten their belts. If they don't, we'll have officers doing the law enforcement version of the May 'sweeps.'”

The federal grant comes from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and is distributed by the California Office of Traffic Safety.

The grant provides funds to purchase billboard, radio and television spots and to pay enforcement overtime for officers.

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